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RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY 0311  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 000122

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/06/2019  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [SNAR](#) [HA](#)  
SUBJECT: HAITI: ELECTORAL COUNCIL BARS LAVALAS, GUY  
PHILIPPE FROM SENATORIAL ELECTIONS

REF: A. PORT AU PRINCE 117  
[1](#)B. PORT AU PRINCE 104

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Thomas C. Tighe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) announced late February 5 the exclusion of 40 of the 105 prospective candidates that had registered to compete in the April senatorial elections, including all 16 candidates representing Fanmi Lavalas. Leaders of Lavalas, the party of ousted former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, are planning demonstrations to protest. The CEP also barred indicted drug trafficker Guy Philippe from the election. A significant MINUSTAH and Haitian National Police presence is deployed near the National Palace and CEP headquarters. End summary.

BOTH FACTIONS OF LAVALAS EXCLUDED  
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[1](#)2. (C) Near midnight February 5, the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) published the list of 65 approved candidates -- out of the original 105 who had registered -- for participation in the April 19 partial Senate elections. The CEP disqualified all Fanmi Lavalas (FL) candidates from the upcoming election. Lavalas was the only major party to have all of its candidates rejected. All candidates of the Lespwa coalition (under whose banner Rene Preval won the Presidency in 2006) and another party close to Preval, the Union of Haitian Citizens for Democracy, Development, and Education (UCADDE) were approved.

[1](#)3. (C) The CEP told the Charge February 3 (ref A) they rejected the Lavalas candidates because none had submitted an attestation from official party leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide authorizing them to represent the party in the upcoming elections. (Note: The CEP gave parties and candidates until the afternoon of February 4 to provide additional information, but Lavalas was either unable or unwilling to submit documents evidencing Aristide's approval of the candidates. End note) Internal divisions compounded the party's problems: in four departments, competing factions of Lavalas had registered competing candidates for the same Senate post (ref B). Early Lavalas reaction to the decision has been mixed: Sen. Rudy Heriveaux called for calm February 6 and asked FL supporters "not to fall into the trap of violence," while one Lavalas official provocatively compared the exclusion of FL to the "coup d'etat" that lead to

Aristide's departure in 2004. According to an RSO source, a demonstration was planned for February 7 in the Champs de Mars area of the capital, near the National Palace.

#### GUY PHILIPPE, OTHERS ALSO REJECTED

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¶4. (C) Suspected drug trafficker Guy Philippe (National Front for Reconstruction -- FRN), currently under indictment in the United States, was also excluded from the final list of candidates. (Note: Philippe openly registered for the elections in Grand'Anse in late January. A prominent local human rights organization had denounced his candidacy, given the well established charges against him. End note) Two other controversial candidates were also rejected: David Chery (ALAH), convicted of embezzlement in the case of the "Coeurs Unis" cooperative he directed, and Jocelerme Privert (Independent), the Lavalas-supported former Minister of Interior under Aristide. At least two suspected criminals, however, made it onto the final list, including Emmanuel Chevry (Fusion), the former Haitian Armed Forces (FAdH) officer expelled from that institution in 1989 for suspected drug trafficking, and Moise Jean Charles (Lespwa), an advisor to President Preval and one-time Lavalas activist implicated in the violent suppression of anti-Aristide protests in 2003 in Cap Haitien.

¶5. (SBU) Beside the 16 Fanmi Lavalas candidates and others with a controversial past, the CEP rejected approximately 20 other candidates for failing to meet the requirements of the Electoral Law. Nine candidates, for instance, failed to

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submit the required certificate from the Haitian immigration service verifying that they are not dual nationals, according to the CEP's spokesman.

#### POLICE, UN PEACEKEEPERS MAINTAIN ROBUST PRESENCE

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¶6. (C) The Haitian National Police (HNP) and MINUSTAH, including an Indian formed police unit (FPU), have maintained a robust presence around the CEP headquarters since February ¶4. CEP counselors have requested HNP and MINUSTAH protection. Most traffic flowed normally through the streets of Port-au-Prince the morning of February 6, although the street in front of the CEP remained blocked. Police presence in other parts of the capital appeared only slightly above normal. A Jordanian FPU from MINUSTAH and numerous Haitian riot police (CIMO) officers were deployed in the CIMO compound near the National Palace.

#### LAVALAS MILITANTS PLAN PROTESTS

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¶7. (C) MINUSTAH reports that approximately 40 Lavalas activists, including Nahoum Marcellus and Rene Civil, met February 5 in the Belair neighborhood of Port-au-Prince and decided to mount peaceful daily demonstrations in cities throughout the country to call for the inclusion of Lavalas candidates in the upcoming elections. One source indicated that organizers hope as many as 5,000 protestors may attend a demonstration February 7 in front of the National Palace.

#### COMMENT: BUMPY ROAD AHEAD

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¶8. (C) Embassy's reading of the electoral law finds no provision for appealing the exclusion of candidates at this stage in the process. Lavalas will not take this decision laying down. While the party is disunited and decentralized, their blanket exclusion from the elections will likely cause them to rally their "popular organizations" in various Port-au-Prince neighborhoods, and in other large Haitian cities, to demonstrate their strength and try to force the government to back down. The exclusion of Guy Philippe, who

has an extensive network of supporters in the Grand'Anse region, is a possible additional source of volatility in the Southwest. For the moment, the streets remain quiet, as Haitian National Police officers and MINUSTAH troops are out in force.

TIGHE